

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes a change to Figure 1. This sheet, which includes only Figure 1, replaces the original sheet including Figure 1. In Figure 1, previously omitted element 18 has been added and element 16 has been deleted.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
 Annotated Sheet Showing Change

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are in the application. Claims 9 and 16-19 have been withdrawn from consideration at this time as being drawn to a non-elected species.

By this amendment, Claims 1 and 12 and Paragraph [0018] of the specification have been amended, and Claim 20 has been canceled as being a duplicate of Claim 15 as originally filed. Claims 5-8 and 12-14 have been objected to.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-8 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the grounds that the language “a variable-output airbag system for fully deploying an airbag substantially proximate to when said seatbelt restraint receives a maximum seatbelt load” is unclear. In response, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that “a variable-output airbag system for fully deploying an airbag substantially proximate in time to when said seatbelt restraint receives a maximum seatbelt load.” As amended, Claim 1 makes clear that what is “proximate” is not a question of space but, rather, of time. The question of “proximate” meaning time rather than space is readily resolved with reference to Paragraph [0020] of Applicant's Specification, wherein it is set forth with crystal clarity that what is being determined by Applicant's invention is first of all a rate and time at which the vehicle occupant will apply a maximum load to a seatbelt, and use of this rate to calculate a corresponding output rate for an airbag actuator to fully deploy the airbag at the same time the seatbelt is fully loaded. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, Claim 1 is clear, as is Claim 12, which is also then amended in line with the Examiner's suggestion. Claims 1 and 12 should therefore be passed to issue. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-4, 10, 11, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Stanley (U.S. Patent 6,260,879). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and requests that each of Claims 1-4, 10, 11, 15 be reconsidered in view of these remarks and passed to issue over the Examiner's rejection.

Stanley discloses a system for measuring the spatial proximity of a vehicle occupant to an airbag. Then, armed with information as to that spatial proximity, the airbag and seatbelt may be adjusted. In contrast, Applicant's use of the term proximity has a temporal meaning, such that the seatbelt tensioning rate is determined and the airbag is inflated at a corresponding rate, such that the airbag is fully inflated to whatever inflation is desired at the time the maximum tension has been placed on the seatbelt. Thus, Applicant's claimed invention, as set forth in Claims 1-4, 10, 11, and 15 all patentably define over Stanley and should be passed to issue over the Examiner's rejection. Such action is earnestly solicited.

In sum, each of the claims remaining in this case is now in condition to be passed to issue, and such action is earnestly solicited.

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

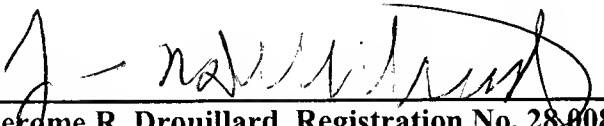
It is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. Further and favorable action is requested.

The Patent Office is authorized to charge any fee deficiency or refund any excess to Deposit Account No. 06-1510.

Respectfully submitted,

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10/11/07
Date


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